

By Thyrza Young Burkitt Lethbridge Alta.

murder
THE STORY OF CONSTABLE GRABURN OF THE R.N.W.M. POLICE,

WHO WAS MURDERED NEAR GRABURN COULEE, 45 MILES SOUTHEAST OF MEDICINE
HAT, ON NOVEMBER 17TH, 1879. *10*

murder
ONE TRAGEDY IN CONNECTION WITH THE EARLY POLICE HISTORY
IN THE FORT WALSH AREA IN THE CYPRESS HILLS, WAS THE MURDER OF YOUNG
CONSTABLE GRABURN, IN THE LATTER PART OF NOVEMBER, IN THE YEAR 1897,
BY A BLOOD INDIAN.

CONSTABLE GRABURN, WHO WAS ONE OF THE "MOUNTIES" STATIONED
AT FORT WALSH, WAS GIVEN AN ORDER ONE AFTERNOON TO GO TO THE HORSE
CAMP SOME FEW MILES WEST OF THE FORT, TO GET A PICKET ROPE, AND AN
AXE WHICH HAD BEEN LEFT THERE. MOUNTING HIS HORSE HE RODE AWAY
THROUGH THE HEAVY BLANKET OF SNOW, NEVER AGAIN TO BE SEEN ALIVE BY
HIS COMRADES.

THE NEXT MORNING, JERRY POTTS, A HALF-BREED POLICE SCOUT,
NOTICED THAT GRABURN HAD NOT RETURNED FROM THE CAMP. THIS FAMOUS
SCOUT HEADED A PARTY WHO WENT IN SEARCH OF THEIR COMRADE. THERE
HAD BEEN A STRONG "CHINOOK WIND" BLOWING THAT NIGHT WHICH MELTED
THE SNOW, LEAVING THE GROUND BARE, AND MAKING IT HARD TO FOLLOW
TRACKS.

AFTER TRAVELLING SOME DISTANCE THE PARTY OF SEARCHERS
CAME UPON THE BODY OF THE YOUNG POLICEMAN,--MURDERED. GRABURN HAD
BEEN SHOT THROUGH THE BACK AS HE WAS GOING DOWN THE COULEE TO THE
BATTLE CREEK.

THIS BAND OF POLICEMEN TRIED TO TRACK THE CULPRIT ON
THE OPEN PRAIRIE, BUT THE GROUND WAS BARE AND THE PONY'S TRACKS WERE
HARD TO FOLLOW. ALONG THE TOP OF THE COULEE AND NEAR THE HILLS THE
SNOW LAY DEEP, BUT AS THIS SNOW DISAPPEARED UNDER THE WARM WINDS,
THE TRAIL VANISHED

*See story in R.C.M.P. book from Bob Harding
Re write for Dec Issue*

THE STOREY

JERRY POTTS WHO KNEW THE INDIAN METHOD OF PROCEEDURE AND THE PRAIRIE COUNTRY, WAS STRONGLY OF THE OPINION THAT THE MURDERER HAD GONE SOUTH AND CROSSED THE "BORDER" INTO MONTANA. THIS PRESUMPTION WAS AFTERWARDS PROVEN TO BE CORRECT, AS THE MURDER WAS FOUND TO BE IN HIDING IN THE BEAR PAW MOUNTAINS IN MONTANA.

THERE WAS NO EXTRADITION TREATY IN FORCE AFFECTING MONTANA AT THAT TIME, AND THE "LAW" WAS OBLIGED TO WAIT THEIR TIME TO CATCH THE CUBPRIT IF, AND WHEN, HE RETURNED TO HIS TRIBE ON THE BLOOD RESERVE.

AFTER SOME THREE YEARS OF WATCHFUL WAITING, THE MURDERER PAID A SECRET VISIT TO HIS PEOPLE. THE "MOUNTIES" SOON HAD HIM UNDER ARREST, AND HE WAS LATER TRIED AT MACLEOD, ALBERTA, FOR THE MURDER OF CONSTABLE GRABURN.

AT THE TRIAL THE CHIEF WITNESSES WERE TWO BLOOD INDIANS WHO HAD BEEN CONFINED TO JAIL AT FORT WALSH FOR HORSE STEALING IN THE WINTER OF 1879-80. THEY TOLD THE STORY OF AN INDIAN BY THE NAME OF "STAR CHILD", WHO HAD MURDERED A POLICEMAN, AND THEN FLED ACROSS THE LINE.

MANY STORIES WERE CIRCULATED AT THE TIME OF THE MURDER, - ONE RELATING HOW AN AGED INDIAN HAD DIED OF STARVATION AFTER TRYING TO EXIST ON GOPHERS. THIS SEMI-STARVATION DIET WAS THE RESULT OF SCARCITY OF BUFFALO DURING THE WINTER OF 1878, CIVILIZATION BEING BLAMED AS THE CAUSE.

ANOTHER STORY TOLD OF THE REVENGE OF A WRONG COMMITTED UPON A HALF-BREED GIRL BY A WHITE MAN. THE EARLY INDIAN BELIEVED IN "AN EYE FOR AN EYE", AND PERHAPS GRABURN SUFFERED FOR A WRONG COMMITTED BY SOME OTHER MEMBER OF THE WHITE RACE.

"STAR CHILD" AFTERWARDS ADMITTED THE CRIME, BUT THE JURY WAS NEVER SATISFIED AS TO THE GUILT OF THE ACCUSED, AND SO VOTED

FOR AN ACQUITTAL, AND "STAR CHILD" ESCAPED HANGING. HOWEVER, THIS LONG TRIAL GAVE NATURE A CHANCE TO MAKE AMENDS, AND THE MURDERER DIED OF CONSUMPTION AND WAS BURIED ON THE BLOOD RESERVE.

JERRY POTTS MAINTAINED THAT GRABURN WAS SHOT WITH A CARBINE RIFLE, FROM A DISTANCE OF FIFTY YARDS OR MORE.

THE FARMERS OF THE GRABURN GAP DISTRICT HAVE PLACED A WHITE ROCK SHAFT, WITH A SUITABLE INSCRIPTION ENGRAVED UPON IT, WHERE THE YOUTHFUL "MOUNTY'S" BODY WAS FOUND ON THE UPPER BANK OF THE RAVINE. HIS REMAINS ARE BURIED IN THE TINY MILITARY CEMETERY AT FORT WALSH.

Constable Marmaduke Graburn, Regimental No. 335, is buried in the R.C.M. Police Cemetery at Fort Walsh, Sask. He was engaged for three years service on the 9th of June 1879 and was killed by Indians while on duty near Fort Walsh on November 17th of the same year. His horse was also found dead having been shot through the head.

The late Const. Graburn was living at 195 Lisgar Street, Ottawa when he enlisted. His previous occupation was given as a sailor.

Const. Graburn was 19 years of age, the youngest policeman on the force at Fort Walsh.

There were 102 policemen and Officers stationed at the Fort Walsh in 1879.